
IVY HILL CEMETERY HISTORICAL PRESERVATION SOCIETY

Dedicated to the preservation of monuments, promotion of history, and protection of flora and fauna of Ivy Hill Cemetery

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NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2012

General Manager Named President of IHC



“Ivy Hill Cemetery Historical Preservation Society is pleased to join the Cemetery Board in welcoming Sheree Parker, pictured above with her family (front row, right), as the President of the Cemetery Corporation. Mrs. Parker has held a number of vital positions at Ivy Hill over the years, and now will oversee all aspects of the cemetery daily operations, administration and financial management.”

– Lucy Goddin, IHC Society President

FROM THE CEMETERY PRESIDENT

Biographical

I am a native of southeastern Michigan, born and raised in the Detroit area. I moved to Richmond, VA in the spring of 1981, where I met and married my husband, John Brantley Parker, a native Virginian. We were blessed with two beautiful children, John Brantley Parker II and Catherine Plewes Parker. Catherine is a student at Blue Ridge Community

College in Weyer’s Cave, preparing to transfer to UVA to study archeology. Young John Brantley is now the Deputy Superintendent at Ivy Hill. He has also provided me with two beautiful granddaughters, Elizabeth, aged 3, and Vanessa, aged 2.

Education

I am a bit of a late bloomer in the education department. I graduated from the Mary Baldwin College Adult

Board of Directors

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BY SHEREE PARKER

Degree program in 2006 with a degree in Business Administration, with emphasis in accounting. I am proud to say that I graduated magna cum laude, with distinction, and was also named the Adult Degree Program’s Outstanding Business Student of 2006. My senior thesis was a long-range plan for the cemetery, entitled, “From Here to Eternity:

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History in Music

As a nation, we are in the midst of commemorating the 150th anniversary (2011 through 2015) of the Civil War. We are also about to inaugurate the 44th President of the United States. These two events have at least one thing in common: Richard Henry Horner Bales. This makes it the ideal time to remember the gifts Richard Bales (1915-1998) gave to us.

Bales was a conductor and composer who was the first music director of the National Gallery of Art and served in that capacity from 1942 until 1985. In addition to his duties as Conductor, Bales composed a number of cantatas regarding American history. Two of his better-known works were inspired by the Civil War: *The Confederacy* and *The Union*. *The New York Times* referred to another famous piece by Bales, *The Republic*, as “a celebration of the American Revolution.” *The Republic* has been performed at every US Presidential inauguration since 1957.

Education & Training

After attending Episcopal High School in Alexandria, Bales studied music at the Eastman School of Music in New York (Bachelor of Music, 1936) and at Juilliard (graduate school, 1938-1941). In the summer of 1940, he studied conducting under Serge Koussevitzky (Conductor, BSO) who founded the Berkshire Music Center at Tanglewood (now known as the Tanglewood Music Center) in 1940, three years after Tanglewood was established as the summer home of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. (For a look at Tanglewood training in 1940’s and to hear some fine music, see *The Tanglewood Story* at bso.org/brands/tanglewood/features/the-tanglewood-story.aspx)

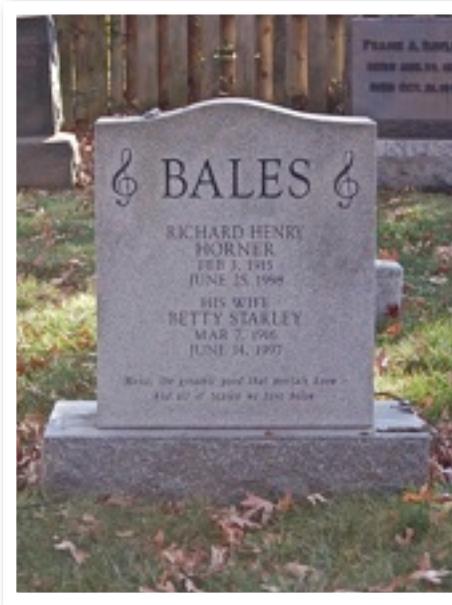
Conducting

Bales’ conducting debut was with the National Symphony Orchestra in 1935. He then became the Conductor of the North Carolina Symphony Orchestra (1936-1938). He was hired in 1943, as the

first Director of Music for the National Gallery of Art. There helped organize the first National Gallery Orchestra and conducted his first concert at the Gallery in July of 1943. The initial orchestra was composed of 25 members who were all members of the National Symphony Orchestra as well. Bales built the Gallery’s Orchestra in size and stature over the years until it reached the level of a full symphony orchestra.

Music for All

Having started at the Gallery during WWII, Bales conducted the Gallery’s free concerts on Sundays for members of the armed services. The concerts continued for the general public after the war and Bales conducted more than 1700 free concerts for, by Gallery estimates, hundreds of thousands of visitors. Bales initiated the Gallery’s American Music Festival, the longest-running annual concert series to feature American composers’ music. He also arranged for the concerts to be broadcast by radio starting in 1950. This practice continued beyond the end of his tenure until 1992.



Music, the greatest good that mortals know, And all of heaven we have below

In 1945-1946, Bales also served as the music director for the National Cathedral Choral Society. He received the 1960 Alice M. Ditson Award from Columbia University, an honor for conductors committed to the performance of American music.

Bales premiered his composition, “A Dirge for Two Veterans,” based on a work of Walt Whitman, at a Sunday evening concert on June 30, 1985, his last performance before retiring from the National Gallery.

Engraved on the headstone Richard Bales shares with his wife, Betty Starley Bales (1916-1997), is the Joseph Addison quote ... “Music, the greatest good that mortals know, And all of heaven we have below.”

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Sources: nytimes.com/1985/06/30/us/briefing-coda.html ; bso.org/brands/tanglewood/features/the-tanglewood-story.aspx ; bach-cantatas.com/index.htm BY Aryeh Oron (2011) ; nga.gov/press/2004/releases/spring/concert.shtm.

FALL EVENTS AT IVY HILL



Episcopal High School & T.C. Williams High School students conducted longevity studies at Ivy Hill this Fall for their Advance Placement Science classes.



The Yankee Clippers conducted a hands-on workshop in pruning techniques at Ivy Hill in November. Small groups worked on projects around the cemetery with instructors who guided and answered questions: "When is the best time to prune?" "Whenever you have the time!"

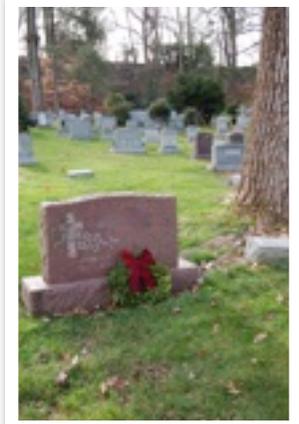


The Alexandria Fire Department & Friendship Veterans Fire Association held its Annual Memorial Service & Wreath Laying to honor the men & women of the department who work to protect Alexandria.



On November 11, 2012, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, families and neighbors joined with the Society and the Cemetery to honor our Veterans by placing flags at each Veteran's grave site. The weather was perfect & the camaraderie was high. It was a lovely & meaningful way to commemorate Veterans Day.

On December 5, the Society made holiday wreaths of Ivy Hill boxwood and red bows and placed them at grave sites of loved ones for family members who are not in the area. This was a service (\$30/wreath) offered through the Society's email list serve in November. To join the monthly list serve, email tara@ihchps.org.



NOW AVAILABLE

Original pastels have been created of four of the charming Angels of Ivy Hill Cemetery. These compelling works of art have been made into 4.5 x 5.5 inch greeting cards and are available in sets of eight cards (two cards of each image) for \$16 and 12 cards (three cards of each image) for \$24. Profits from the sale of the cards will be donated to the Ivy Hill Cemetery Historical Preservation Society.

To see all four cards, visit the IHCHPS website at ihchps.org and click on Angel Cards.

To place an order or for more information, please email tara@ihchps.org and your email will be forwarded to the artist.



NEW IHC PRESIDENT & GENERAL MANAGER

(Continued from p.1)

The Next 150 Years at Ivy Hill.” My educational plans for the future include preparing to sit for the CPA examination and the pursuit of graduate study in non-profit management.

Association with Ivy Hill

I have been associated with the cemetery, in various capacities, since 1998. At one time or another, over the years, I have performed every task required for its operations and administration, with the exceptions of digging graves and setting stones with my own hands.

Most of my work for the cemetery has been behind-the-scenes, focusing on administration and finance. My major projects have been the re-design of the cemetery’s operational record-keeping systems, the restructuring and computerization of the bookkeeping and accounting processes, and the management of the cemetery’s investments. During that time my titles have ranged from Woman of All Work, to Office Manager, to CFO and vice-president.

I assumed the role of General Manager in April of 2012, in order to prepare for a smooth transition when Tom Bowling retired in July of 2012, after 50 years of service to the cemetery. In October of this year, the IHC Board of Directors elected me president of the corporation.

In addition to overseeing all aspects of the cemetery’s operations and administration, I will continue to be responsible for the

bookkeeping and accounting functions, management of the cemetery’s investments, and the preparation of its tax returns. In 2013, to reduce overhead and free up funds for other projects, I will be assuming direct responsibility for the maintenance of the cemetery’s digital record-keeping system.

The Future

As the title of my thesis would indicate, I believe that Ivy Hill can be a viable part of the community for another 150 years. While remaining mindful of our heritage, we must adapt to changing trends in our industry by carefully developing the remaining areas of the cemetery to respond to the growing demand for cremation burial products and services.

While new products and services are vital to our ongoing development, our most important products remain family service, and the beauty and serenity of the cemetery itself. With regard to family service, we have begun a program of professional development and cross-training, to ensure that every member of our staff is able to provide first quality customer service, from the point of first contact to completion of the funeral service. My goal is to have the family experience at Ivy Hill be of a caliber that our client families will become our sales force by referring family and friends.

To ensure that we are maintaining the cemetery at its optimum, we have begun a program of “walking the cemetery.” Each

section will be examined in a rotating schedule. Every member of the staff will have an assigned section. At our weekly staff meetings, we will share our section reports and ideas to solve problems, and to improve the appearance of our respective sections.

In addition, we will be working to upgrade our image and create a brand. We have recently created a Facebook page, www.facebook.com/IvyHillCemetery, where we can share and highlight our image and involvement in the community. In addition to our signature event, the annual Firefighters’ Memorial Wreath Laying, which takes place in October, we have successfully partnered with our sister organization, the Ivy Hill Cemetery Historical Preservation Society, to co-host an Alexandria Volunteer Day event, a scavenger hunt, story-reading outing for a local preschool, a visit from the Yankee Clippers, a professional horticulturist who teaches pruning and care of ornamental shrubs, and a community flag placement day to honor our veterans. We want to broaden our participation in the community by hosting or co-hosting other events. My goal is to have a minimum of one community participation event per month.

I welcome the comments, concerns, and suggestions of all of the friends of Ivy Hill. I look forward to working with all interested parties to ensure the cemetery’s vibrant future. My door is always open. Call the office or e-mail me at swparker@ivyhill.org.

LOOKING FORWARD TO THE NEW YEAR

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this & the other editions of the newsletter this year, to all the volunteers who participated in this season's events & to our generous donors who make the work of the Society at Ivy Hill possible.

The Ivy Hill Cemetery Historical Preservation Society wishes you all the best during this holiday season and in the new year. As we reflect on what we have accomplished together this year, we also look forward to joining with you again during 2013 to protect, preserve and honor

all that Ivy Hill has to offer its families and the community.



With your help we will be able to complete ongoing projects like restoration of the Vault, provide help for special tasks like revitalizing the trees or protecting the monuments, continue community education programs & assist the Cemetery in all their priorities to keep Ivy Hill a vital & secure part of the community now and in the future.

Thank you for all you do to help. It makes all the difference!

